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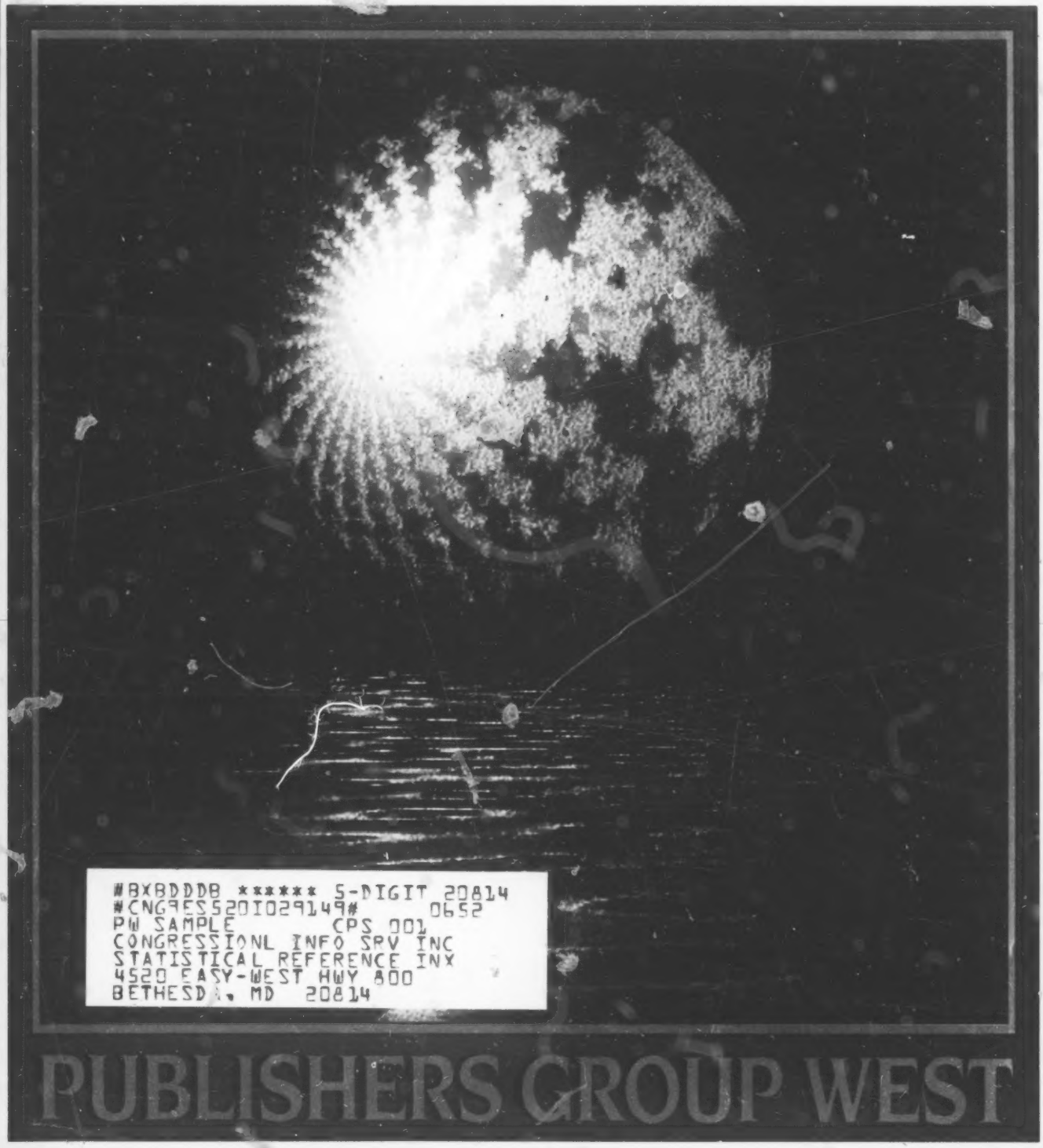

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Balancing the Books, 1990

U.S. Book Exports Approach $1.5 Billion; World Data Reported

BY CHANDLER B. GRANNIS

United States book exports amounted to $1.43 billion in 1990, according to data extracted by *PW* from United States Department of Commerce (USDC) reports. Imports came to over $902 million. The 1990 export-to-import ratio for books was therefore about 61 to 39.

Book export and import figures are always incomplete because, among other reasons, they do not include low-value shipments. Currently, export shipments valued at less than $2500, and import shipments valued below $1250, are excluded.

Efforts are made by the USDC, with industry cooperation, to improve the accuracy of the statistics. For 1990, the overall U.S. export total reflects a plan by which the U.S. and Canada use each other's import data to enhance their own export data, according to William S. Lofquist, printing and publishing specialist at the USDC's International Trade Association.

Tables 1 and 2 show some breakdowns according to specific categories including textbooks, Bibles, professioanl books and some other defined areas, but large numbers of miscellaneous books are still being lumped together in immense, catch-all groups of items "not elsewhere specified or indicated."

Tables 5 and 6 show dollars and quantities for transactions between the U.S. and its major book trade partners.

TABLE 1

U.S. BOOK EXPORTS, 1990

Shipments Valued at $2500 or more
(dollars and units in thousands)

	1990 $	% Chg. 89–90	1990 Units	% Chg. 89–90
Dictionaries	4,659.0	+.001	1,231.9	+6
Encyclopedias	39,369.0	+26.0	6,694.9	+18
Textbooks	128,431.0	-35.3	24,720.7	-30
Bibles & Other Religious Books	55,341.0	-9.4	38,308.1	-24
Technical, Scientific, & Professional Books	322,647.0	-15.8	46,218.8	-19
Art & Pictorial Books	12,242.0	-27.6	7,062.1	+5
Hardbound Books not elsewhere indicated	42,194.0	-61.1	15,535.2	-61
Rack-size Paperbound	49,956.0	-70.6	34,118.3	-63
Other Books not elsewhere indicated	736,063.0	+468.4	1,092,877.9	+180
Children's Picture Coloring, Drawing	12,875.0	+26.6	—	—
Music Books	17,502.0	+112.8	—	—
Atlases	6,725.0	+619.3	—	—
TOTAL EXPORTS	$1,428,004.0	+27.1	—	—

TABLE 2

U.S. BOOK IMPORTS, 1989-1990

Shipments Valued at $1250 or more
(dollars and units in thousands)

	1990 $	% Chg. 89–90	1990 Units	% Chg. 89–90
Dictionaries, Thesauruses	$7,040.0	+52.2	4,728.3	+256.3
Encyclopedias (incl. installments)	7,143.0	+35.2	956.3	+9.9
Textbooks	87,040.0	+9.8	17,913.9	+7.9
Bibles & Other Religious Books	33,636.0	+9.6	40,599.9	+34.9
Technical, Scientific, Professional	112,713.0	+19.7	24,608.1	+26.7
Art, Pictorial: under $5 each	17,559.0	+6.2	12,020.9	-32.2
$5 and up each	28,925.0	+45.8	2,578.6	+46.6
Hardbound Books not elsewhere specified	314,803.0	+10.2	95,317.2	+6.5
Rack-size Paperbound	41,574.0	+53.7	34,078.7	+65.3
Other, not over 4pp.	4,245.0	+7.1	16,707.1	-9.8
5–48pp.	52,574.0	+6.7	120,820.5	+.001
49pp. or more	136,473.0	+.001	70,729.8	-7.6
Children's picture, coloring, drawing	50,565.0	+26.9	—	—
Music Books	3,600.0	+22.2	—	—
Maps, Atlases	4,311	—	—	—
TOTALS	$902,201.0	+12.8	441,059.2	—

A completely different universe of data is represented in Tables A, B and C. *PW* has derived these mainly from the *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook*, and they show trends in numbers of titles translated from major languages and by selected countries; and title output as reported—somewhat unevenly—by nations around the world.

On the matter of U.S. and Canadian data-sharing mentioned above, Mr. Lofquist has described the situation in the following statement for *PW:*

"In an attempt to get better trade data between the United States and Canada, both countries agreed in January 1990 to an exchange of import data. The purpose of this exchange was to use each country's imports as a 'proxy' for each country's exports: hence, to ostensibly obtain more complete and meaningful trade statistics. With regard to the 1990 trade data, the result is better detail at the aggregate level (i.e. books) but little or no detail at the individual category level (textbooks). This inadvertent result came about because both countries have significantly different categories covering their trade in books, as well as some other commodities. This problem of adequate coverage of individual categories is expected to be corrected beginning with the 1991 trade data."

TABLE 3

BOOK EXPORT-IMPORT RATIOS

Millions of Dollars

	Exp.	Imp.	Approx. ratios
1990	$1,428.0	$902.2	61–39
1985	591.2	564.3	51–49
1980	518.9	511.6	50.1–49.9
1975	269.3	147.6	60–40
1970	174.9	92.0	68–35

TABLE 4

U.S. BOOK EXPORTS COMPARED TO TOTAL U.S. BOOK SALES, 1970–90

(in thousands)

	Exports	Tot. sales	Exports as % of total sales
1990	$ 1,428.0	$ 15,365.1	9.4
1985	591.2	10,156.0	5.8
1980	518.9	6,411.0	8.1
1975	269.3	3,789.3	7.1
1970	174.9	2,677.0	6.5

TABLE 5

U.S. BOOK EXPORTS TO MAJOR COUNTRIES, 1989–1990

Shipments Valued at $2500 or More. Principal Countries & European Economic Community

(Ranked by 1990 dollar amounts, in thousands)

	1990 $	1989 $	1990 Units	1989 Units
Canada	$664,448	$394,189	935,424.3	168,523.6
United Kingdom	171,391	167,138	64,943.9	63,578.6
Australia	106,274	112,683	50,651.8	50,377.2
Japan	87,562	79,159	39,113.4	31,377.2
Germany, West	42,244	39,873	15,856.3	12,290.1
Netherlands	33,715	32,735	13,321.7	12,610.9
Mexico	32,337	26,339	11,064.9	10,542.3
Singapore	31,321	21,715	15,467.2	11,541.8
France	20,144	21,448	8,091.4	6,649.8
India	17,576	15,615	5,213.3	4,344.3
Taiwan	15,304	12,648	6,004.2	6,420.3
Hong Kong	12,853	10,987	5,517.7	4,400.0
Brazil	12,451	14,910	4,724.0	4,839.1
Rep. South Africa	11,378	14,752	7,993.2	9,203.1
Philippines	10,560	11,949	5,369.5	7,203.1
Switzerland	9,854	6,922	4,083.6	2,814.7
Italy	9,799	8,815	3,172.4	3,537.1
Spain	9,687	7,208	3,916.0	2,613.7
New Zealand	9,600	8,007	4,807.0	4,884.1
Korea, South	8,245	7,764	3,054.1	3,143.9
Ireland	7,946	9,782	1,826.7	2,521.7
Sweden	6,597	6,403	1,864.1	2,303.4
Argentina	5,746	3,440	4,987.1	2,938.3
Finland	5,095	3,020	2,796.0	1,485.0
Venezuela	4,772	4,999	5,275.2	5,618.9
Israel	4,321	4,232	1,826.5	1,633.5
Denmark	4,012	3,031	1,354.6	1,133.5
Malaysia	3,998	3,386	1,483.6	1,209.3
Portugal	3,881	4,836	1,918.8	1,757.8
ALL COUNTRIES	**$1,428,003**	**$1,123,155**	**1,266.767.9**	**477,465.5**

TABLE 6

U.S. BOOK IMPORTS FROM MAJOR COUNTRIES, 1989–1990

Shipments Valued at $1250 or More

(Ranked by 1990 dollar amounts, in thousands)

	1990 $	1989 $	1990 Units	1989 Units
United Kingdom	$216,420	$189,482	59,412.7	59,430.2
Hong Kong	136,701	102,504	61,110.5	49,378.5
Japan	123,351	120,694	61,048.7	54,980.4
Italy	81,731	62,409	53,740.3	49,378.3
Canada	61,584	61,896	92,332.3	104,902.3
Singapore	55,604	44,774	19,757.6	19,573.7
Germany, West	38,952	37,438	11,490.9	11,167.7
Spain	38,906	43,947	12,844.0	14,369.1
Netherlands	14,188	14,648	5,448.6	4,436.1
Korea, South	14,064	12,618	7,658.7	6,893.7
France	11,235	10,638	5,248.5	4,524.2
Belgium	10,797	12,396	4,864.9	4,854.7
Taiwan	10,668	9,983	3,303.2	7,572.5
Columbia	10,489	9,355	5,883.9	5,450.5
Switzerland	10,369	8,640	2,348.9	2,173.7
Mexico	8,028	7,190	5,800.9	3,275.4
Yugoslavia	7,609	5,845	4,506.4	4,428.3
Australia	6,964	5,314	2,097.8	1,587.1
Denmark	6,657	6,521	2,289.9	1,402.9
Israel	5,847	6,004	1,249.0	1,651.6
Sweden	5,359	3,133	1,369.5	1,573.4
China	3,595	4,887	1,351.4	2,480.8
WORLD TOTALS	$902,201	799,932	441,059.2	408,642.9

TABLE A

TRANSLATION PUBLISHING

By Principal Countries, 1982–1984

	1982	1983	1984
Brazil	519	1,433	1,331
Czechoslovakia	1,673	1,161	1,272
Denmark	1,387	1,503	1,659
Finland	1,425	1,250	1,421
France	1,894	3,436	3,821
Germany, West	8,168	7,600	6,868
Hungary	1,227	1,397	1,238
Italy	2,034	2,939	2,289
Japan	2,479	2,498	2,698
Norway	1,000	1,004	1,251
Poland	1,009	704	615
Spain	7,381	7,447	7,741
Sweden	2,128	1,996	1,916
Switzerland	1,002	1,106	1,084
Turkey	811	808	1,152
USSR	7,196	7,443	7,758
UK	1,070	1,143	1,153
USA	1,319	969	1,439
Yugoslavia	1,599	1,297	1,280
All Reporting Countries	52,198	55,618	52,405

TABLE B

WORLD TRANSLATION PUBLICATIONS

From Selected Languages 1982–1984

	1982	1983	1984
English	22,208	24,468	22,724
French	6,205	6,084	4,422
German	4,501	4,818	5,311
Russian	6,238	6,370	6,230
Italian	1,433	1,645	1,544
*Scandinavian	1,957	2,176	2,192
Spanish	715	847	839
Classical, Greek, Latin	839	1,116	1,035
Hungarian	703	665	679
Arabic	298	322	536
Japanese	208	222	204
Chinese	159	148	163
WORLD TOTALS	52,198	55,618	52,405

*Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Islandic

Source: *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1990* (partial data).

TABLE C

WORLD BOOK TITLE OUTPUT 1986–1988

Principal Publishing Countries & EEC (partial)

	1986	1987	1988
AFRICA			
Egypt	1,416	1,276	1,451
Nigeria	—	2,352	1,424
Tunisia	—	1,160	293
NORTH AMERICA			
Canada	6,623	7,263	7,550
Cuba	2,174	2,315	2,069
Mexico	4,897	7,725	4,826
United States	52,637	56,027	52,069
SOUTH AMERICA			
Argentina	—	4,818	4,826
Chile	1,499	1,654	1,840
Venezuela	—	1,202	—
ASIA			
Bangladesh	1,806	1,709	1,209
India	12,543	14,965	14,408
Indonesia	2,480	2,052	1,687
Iran	—	2,996	3,401
Japan	44,686	36,346	—
Korea, South	41,543	44,288	42,942
Malaysia	3,397	—	—
Philippines	804	1,768	1,072
Sri Lanka	2,368	—	—
Thailand	7,728	—	—
EUROPE			
Austria	9,560	8,910	8,360
Belgium	—	7,091	—
Bulgaria	4,924	4,583	4,379
Czechoslovakia	10,020	10,565	9,558
Denmark	10,957	11,129	—
Finland	8,694	9,106	10,386
France	32,934	43,505	39,026

	1986	1987	1988
EUROPE continued			
Germany, East	6,486	6,515	6,526
Germany, West	63,724	65,670	68,611
Hungary	9,857	9,111	8,621
Iceland	—	1,231	—
Italy	16,297	17,109	19,820
Netherlands	13,368	13,329	13,845
Norway	3,284	6,757	4,894
Poland	9,881	10,416	10,728
Portugal	10,782	7,733	—
Spain	38,405	38,302	35,426
Sweden	10,587	11,516	11,794
Switzerland	11,626	12,410	12,696
United Kingdom	57,845	59,839	62,069
Yugoslavia	10,734	10,619	12,100
OCEANA			
Australia	7,460	—	—
U.S.S.R.			
U.S.S.R.	83,472	83,011	—
Byelorussia	3,182	—	2,962
Ukraine	8,155	8,134	8,311

SOURCE: *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1990*, except U.S. figures, derived by *Publishers Weekly* from R.R. Bowker Data Services; U.K. figures from *The Bookseller*, London; Canadian figures from Statistics Canada, (Michel Frève, Book Publishing Survey manager), Ottawa. U.S. figures do not include publications of state and local governments, some institutions, company reports, proceedings, lab manuals, yearbooks, U.S. Government Printing Office output and university theses. However, the books of University Presses, religious organizations and other nonprofit publishers are included.

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